

Guiding Principles for Developing EFF Assessment Framework

1. The EFF Assessment Framework must address multiple purposes for assessment.

The Framework must provide for

- information on learner achievements and mastery that is useful to the learner as well as the teacher throughout the instructional process;
- information about what learners can do that is credible to employers, educational institutions, and policymakers, as well as to learners themselves; and
- information that is useful for program and system improvement and accountability.

2. To address these multiple purposes, the EFF Assessment Framework must support a multidimensional, flexible, and systemic approach to assessment. Teachers and programs will be able to choose from a range of tools, to be identified or developed, that enable them to accurately measure performance against EFF Standards and that are linked to one another so that multiple assessments can provide a rich portrait of learner competence.

3. The EFF Assessment Framework must address learning over a lifetime. Strategies for assessment and credentialing must take into account the fact that adults build skills over time (rather than all at once) in

response to changes in their life situations. Certificates and other credentials must be modular, designed to define competence or mastery at a particular point, and within a framework that assumes continuing development of competence as skills, knowledge, and understanding are further developed over time.

4. Since EFF Standards define skills all adults need in order to carry out their roles as workers and as members of families and communities, the EFF Assessment Framework must address a single continuum of performance for all adults—adults with only minimal formal education and those with many years of formal education, including advanced degrees.

5. Each level defined in the EFF Assessment Framework must communicate clearly what an adult at that level can do. Numerical levels don't communicate meaning to external audiences. Grade levels seem to communicate a common picture of performance; but, in fact, the meaning behind the label varies widely from community to community and state to state. Grade levels are particularly misleading when applied to adult performance, since they focus on developmental skill levels that don't match the ways in which adults, with their broader background and range of

experience, can combine skills and knowledge to perform effectively in daily life.

6. The levels defined in the EFF Assessment Framework must be explicitly linked to key external measures of competence (e.g., certificates of mastery, NAAL/IAL survey levels, diplomas, and other credentials) **and key pathways** (e.g., entry to higher education and entry to employment as defined by occupational skill standards) **so that adults and systems can rely on them as accurate predictors of real-world performance.**

7. The levels defined in the EFF Assessment Framework must be the product of a national consensus-building process that assures portability of certificates and credentials.

8. Work on the development of this framework must maintain the strong customer focus that has distinguished the EFF Standards development process to date. It must be based on a broad, inclusive definition of maximizing accountability for all activities to all customers, starting with the adult learner.